



**For Immediate Release  
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### **Gov. Shumlin, Commissioner Vilaseca announce \$5 million federal grant for education**

MONTPELIER – Vermont has been awarded a \$5 million grant to enable the state to more efficiently collect and report on education information statewide, Gov. Peter Shumlin and Education Commissioner Armando Vilaseca announced today. When fully implemented in 2015, the program will allow the state to track academic trends, challenges and successes in a timely manner, and move quickly to correct problems and build on strengths in our schools.

“With this grant, Vermont will finally have timely access to the information we need to fix problems and identify strengths that improve education for every student,” said Gov. Shumlin. “Now we will be able to quickly determine how many students have taken geometry by the 9th grade, for example, and work with other districts, schools, and teachers to require that standard.”

The \$4.95 million grant is a Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant from the Institute of Education Sciences, a research arm of U.S. Department of Education, is a three-year award that runs out on June 30, 2015. Schools and districts currently collect information on students, educators and curriculum manually and report it periodically to the state – a cumbersome and often incomplete process. When the system is fully operational in three years, the same information will be collected, but all schools and districts will be able gather and send that data directly from their local systems to the state so that it’s immediately available, more complete and accurate. The new system will track students, educators, and courses in grades K-12, but the goal is to ultimately expand to include pre-K students through their entry to the workforce.

“This streamlined K-12 system forms the foundation of a larger comprehensive data system that will eventually include early education, higher education, and workforce data to make it a true preschool to post-graduate and career-ready measurement system,” said Commissioner Vilaseca. “We are proud of this project; Vermont tied with Montana for the highest rated proposal received, and that speaks volumes to our efforts as becoming known as the education state.”

This system will provide critical information to help support Vermont students who have struggled in the past, helping to set up support systems for students in poverty, with disabilities, and who are newly arrived to this country, for example. The new system also will help to facilitate greater collaboration among the Department of Education, the Agency of Human Services, the Department of Labor, Higher Education, and other strategic partners.

A portion of the full grant -- \$600,000 -- is earmarked for districts to cover any needed changes to their existing systems. In addition, local districts will have a role in setting up the new system through participation in a governance committee. The new system will allow us to unify our databases, creating a clearer picture and enabling us to analyze data from across the entire education spectrum.